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ABSTRACT

This document begins with an overview of the authority, functions, and responsibilities of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS/BPH), an agency of the Library of Congress that is responsible for administering the national program to provide reading materials for the nation's blind and physically handicapped individuals and U.S. citizens living abroad. Functions of the following NLS/BPH divisions are then detailed: (1) the Office of the Director, including the Director, Automation Office, Research and Development Officer, Administrative Section, and Publications and Media Section; (2) the Materials Development Division, including the Materials Development Division Office, Bibliographic Control Section, Braille Development Section, Collection Development Section, Engineering Section, Production Control Section, and Quality Assurance Section; and (3) the Network Division, including the Network Division Office, Consumer Relations Officer, Inventory Management Section, Music Section, Network Services Section, and Reference Section. (MES)

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National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Library of Congress

1291 Taylor Street, NW, Washington, DC 20542; Telephone 202 707-5100; TWX 710-822-1969; FAX 202 707-0712

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FUNCTIONS

OF THE

NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

BROKEN INTO MEANINGFUL PARTS AS MANAGED UNITS OF ACTIVITY

Frank Kurt Cylke
Director

August 3, 1992

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Authority

In accordance with the authority provided in 2 U.S.C. 135(a), 135(b), and 135(c), the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS/BPH) is responsible for administering the national program to provide reading materials for the Nation's blind and physically handicapped individuals and U.S. citizens living abroad. These materials consist of books, magazines, and music scores and texts produced in raised characters, in sound recordings, and in other suitable forms.

Functions and Responsibilities

NLS/BPH is responsible for the:

1) selection, copyright clearance, and procurement of reading materials for blind and physically handicapped individuals;

2) distribution of the materials and relevant bibliographic information either directly or through cooperating state and local network libraries;

3) design, development, and procurement of sound reproduction equipment and its distribution either directly or through cooperating agencies;

4) establishment of standards and assurance of quality products and services;

5) training, guidance, and coordination of volunteers to augment national and local resources;

6) administration of a nationwide interlibrary loan program, and of an international gift, exchange, and interlibrary program;

7) preparation for catalogs and other publications in printed form and/or in other media for blind and physically handicapped readers to insure full use of the national program;

8) provision of a national reference and referral service on all aspects of blindness and physical handicaps;

9) development, maintenance, and circulation of a national collection of musical scores and texts; and

10) monitoring network libraries for effective use of NLS/BPH resources at each site and providing guidelines and procedures manuals.

NLS/BPH maintains active liaison with blind and physically handicapped individuals throughout the country, with cooperating state and local network libraries, with nonprofit and other organizations interested or

active in services to blind and physically handicapped persons, and with federal, state, and local agencies. (See also Library of Congress Regulations 1111-1 through 1111-3, which concern eligibility, selection of materials, and loan service to blind and physically handicapped individuals.)

Custodial Responsibilities

NLS/BPH has custody of all reading materials specifically intended for blind and physically handicapped individuals, including books and magazines in raised characters, sound recordings, and other applicable forms.

DETAILED FUNCTIONS

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

The Office of the Director is responsible for formulating policy, program planning, and directing all activities, including coordinating both the Materials Development Division and the Network Division; planning and implementing all automation activities, including assisting with those for the network of cooperating state and local libraries and agencies; coordinating information on research and development projects, evaluation programs, and surveys; providing liaison with other government or quasi-official agencies, such as the United States Postal Service; and administrative services.

Director

The Director, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, is responsible for administration, planning, policy formulation and recommendations, and direction and coordination of the entire program:

- Plans and develops the national program in accordance with the intent of Congress, library policies, technological progress, and the readers' requirements. Advises the Librarian and other Library officers on matters pertaining to proposed legislation, related programs for the blind and physically handicapped, relations with other government agencies, and policy formation. Responds to Congressional inquiries and requests; testifies before Congressional Committees on budget and program matters.

- Has primary responsibility for formulating the annual budget estimate of NLS/BPH and the justification for presentation to Congress.

- Serves as principal representative of the Library of Congress in its relations with other national and international organizations interested in work which aids blind and physically handicapped persons, maintaining contact with leaders and officials of such organizations,

and participating in conferences, conventions, and other such meetings. Conducts special studies and investigations, and makes recommendations for programs and cooperative undertakings, looking toward providing a more complete service to blind readers. Coordinates the sale and exchange of materials for blind and physically handicapped persons with organizations around the world.

- Has administrative responsibility for assuring that NLS/BPH procures materials and services at the lowest possible cost consistent with the quality and timeliness of delivery required to meet its needs. Serves as Contracting Officer for NLS book contracts and as contract advisor for all other contracts. Approves all concepts, projects, bid packages, and award recommendations. Appoints and provides administrative direction to project monitors.

- Serves as the Designated Official responsible for the health and safety of NLS staff and for space planning, maintenance, and utilization of the Taylor Street Annex, a separate facility distant from Capitol Hill.

- Directs the overall NLS program.

Automation Office

- Monitors development, implementation, and maintenance of customized computer programs for production control of books/magazines, circulation systems, inventory systems, bibliographic cataloging systems, and network communications systems (i.e. NLSNET).

- Coordinates installation and training for new computer systems.

- Analyzes software and hardware needs of staff, orders software and hardware, and provides training for use of software when appropriate.

- Advises managers as to possible uses of computers/software.

- Coordinates use of databases (i.e. BRS, OCLC, DIALOG, COMPUSERV).

- Advises network libraries on automation activities.

Research and Development Officer

- Directs projects to research and develop new products or systems for use by patrons or network libraries.

- Coordinates projects aimed at improving services to patrons or reducing costs of existing services.

- Advises on matters related to new products and services.

- Stays abreast of advances in technology related to production and distribution of braille and recorded books and magazines.

- Serves on Engineering Change Control Board.

Administrative Section

The Administrative Section is responsible for coordinating personnel transactions and maintaining all official files, travel, training, and other records concerning personnel administration; planning and implementing communication services; coordinating fiscal and contractual activities; and coordinating the management, operation, and maintenance of the physical facility.

- Coordinates with personnel offices and process personnel paperwork.
- Advises managers on administrative matters.
- Updates various administrative reports as scheduled and as required.
- Coordinates building maintenance.
- Coordinates in-house training programs and process paperwork for outside training.
- Maintains all communication functions (i.e. telephones, telecopiers, TWX, mail).
- Prepares all fiscal documents (i.e. requisitions, purchase orders, contract solicitations, contract awards, reallotment requests, etc.).
- Maintains all budget records and prepares periodic status of funds reports.
- Maintains serialized equipment inventory.

Publications and Media Section

The Publications and Media Section is responsible for planning and implementing the publications, general information, exhibit, and other public education programs.

- Designs, prepares, and publishes in various formats (print, braille, recorded cassette, and flexible disc) publications to inform the public and stimulate interest in the program:
  - > Magazines
  - > Newsletters
  - > Catalogs
  - > Circulars
  - > Bibliographies
  - > Reference materials
  - > Music materials
  - > Directories
  - > Monographs

> Brochures
> Posters
> Date Finders
> Bookmarks
> Reader Cards
> Miscellaneous promotional products

- Coordinates outreach efforts to targeted groups (seniors, children, etc.).

- Develops new exhibit materials and coordinates public education efforts through exhibits at conventions of various constituent organizations.

- Assists network librarians with local public education efforts.

- Evaluates effectiveness of various publications through surveys.

- Monitors printing contracts through GPO and braille/recorded contracts through NLS.

- Edits annotations and all documents for external distribution and trains staff to write annotations.

- Advises on program matters concerning collection development.

- Reviews books on subject matter of printing, publishing, writing, editing, and public relations (to be added to the collection).

- Serves on review boards for specifications.

MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Materials Development Division is responsible for managing activities related to the selection, development, production, distribution, control, and repair of reading materials and related equipment; establishing and assuring standards of quality for the products; monitoring contracts with and providing guidance to more than 50 agencies, organizations, associations, publishers, and firms that participate in providing reading resources and equipment; directing the activities of book and equipment advisory committees; and supervising the six sections that make up the division.

Materials Development Division Office

- Recommends to the Director on policy formulation and program planning for research, development, design, production, testing, evaluation, procurement, initial distribution, inventory control, and logistical support of recorded books and magazines on disc, magnetic tape, audio cassette, braille books and magazines, playback equipment, and accessories.

- Analyzes operations of MDD sections to determine assignments and responsibilities.

- Directs the division's design, development, quality control, reliability, maintainability, and production activities; establishes production priorities; directs material and equipment procurement planning and preparation of procurement documentation including specifications, evaluation criteria, schedules, and statements of work.

- Oversees the activities of equipment inventory control, spare parts provisioning, logistical support, and preparation of machine trouble shooting and repair documents.

- Directs in-house and contract research and development activity.

- Defines new programs for investigation to improve existing material and equipment.

- Coordinates the preparation of and approves budget requests for submission to the Director.

- Oversees production control techniques.

- Maintains close liaison with consultants, designers, producers, and potential suppliers; supervises evaluation of prospective contractors and proposals for supplies and services.

- Oversees the contract monitoring and surveillance activities of quality assurance staff. Maintains close liaison with consumers to make adjustments to material and equipment designs in accordance with human factor engineering concepts.

- Plans and directs conferences, workshops, and other meetings at which resources, technical and engineering standards, and requirements of the program are discussed in person with responsible or interested suppliers and manufacturers.

- Prepares the division's annual report, management plan, travel and training plans taking into account requirements, Library guidelines and policies, and budgetary limitations.

- Assigns, directs and conducts review of work performed by subordinates. Explains work requirements, methods, and procedures, instructing staff as necessary on new or unique operations. Resolves problems encountered by staff. Prepares workload and production reports, as necessary.

- Analyzes new sources and procedures to satisfy the material development needs of the program and to determine consumer needs and resource capabilities.

- Initiates projects and studies to identify and develop resources and production capabilities. Establishes criteria for evaluating new materials, sources of supply, and delivery procedures. Undertakes surveys of user groups to evaluate acceptability of equipment and materials. Coordinates the evaluation of products submitted through the bid process or by current contractors to assure that appropriate items are selected for the program.

- Coordinates the establishment and implementation of program schedules to ensure that items selected are processed and manufactured in a timely manner. Initiates and organizes the gathering of management information in these areas to support effective operational control. Supervises the preparation, revision, and maintenance of specifications, standards, and drawings governing the production of equipment, books, and related materials.

- Prepares correspondence, memoranda, and progress reports on matters relating to the division. Prepares initial planning documents and summary reports of project activities.

- Reviews and maintains the BPHICS system, which inventories all cassette and talking book machines.

- Issues headphones, amplifiers, remote control units, solar panels, and breath switches to eligible readers.

- Monitors procedures for allocating new equipment to machine-lending agencies.

- Ensures that multistate centers have sufficient stock of machines and accessories.

- Reviews and revises a Machine-Lending Agency Procedures Manual for use by machine-lending agencies in inventory control of equipment.

- Plans and conducts an annual Ad Hoc Audio Equipment Advisory Committee meeting.

- Prepares statistical reports on equipment for planning and purchasing purposes.

- Conducts machine repair workshops for volunteers who repair NLS machines.

- Provides parts and supplies for machine repair by volunteers and libraries.

- Procures batteries for machines and coordinates safe disposal of batteries returned to NLS.

- Monitors national repair facilities that repair NLS machines.

- Prepares and revises repair manuals and video cassettes.

Bibliographic Control Section

The Bibliographic Control Section is responsible for bibliographic processing, maintenance, and control of reading materials included in the national collection; establishing national cataloging standards; coordinating union catalog activities for cooperating libraries and service organizations; managing production of the computer output microform catalog and related products; and participating in professional developments in bibliographic control.

- Provides cataloging and classification for national program materials such as cassettes, discs, and braille.
- Establishes national cataloging standards for network libraries.
- Advises libraries on developing automated cataloging systems.
- Handles bibliographic processing, maintenance, and control for all NLS collections.
- Coordinates union catalog activities and computer-produced catalog and related products.

Braille Development Section

The Braille Development Section is responsible for developing and implementing research projects relating to braille; serving as the Library of Congress authority on all braille codes and maintaining liaison with other national braille authorities; developing all technical braille specifications and initiating programs for product improvement; planning and preparing guides and teaching manuals on the codes, including music and mathematics, for use by local braille transcription instructors who prepare students for certification; and training, certifying, and advising volunteers and others nationwide who produce and process books in braille.

- Develops specifications for all braille products.
- Advises on braille research and development projects.
- Prepares guides and teaching manuals on all codes of braille.
- Trains, recommends certification, and advises volunteers and others who produce braille.
- Resolves problems of format and code with NLS braille producers.
- Assists in quality assuring braille music produced by volunteers.
- Maintains liaison with Braille Authority of North America and National Braille Association.

- Directs the Braille-on-Demand Project to produce braille books for patrons by automation.

- Prepares articles for NLS and other publications.

Collection Development Section

The Collection Development Section is responsible for acquiring print books; evaluating and selecting appropriate reading materials to be recorded, transcribed into braille, or produced in any other form; developing and testing improvements in presentation of materials; maintaining an established flow of selections to initiate the production cycle; requesting copyright clearances; preparing concise, descriptive annotations for all materials produced; maintaining liaison with publishers and authors; coordinating collection development program activities, advisory committees, and the foreign language program; and identifying titles for replacement or withdrawal.

- Selects reading materials to be produced in appropriate media.

- Acquires print books for braille and recorded production.

- Requests copyright clearances for NLS production in special media.

- Prepares annotations for bookcards and for NLS catalogs of titles available.

- Develops foreign language and other special collections for the national program.

- Monitors World Literature Book Club for 500 patrons who are interested in books from other countries.

- Prepares various informational lists about book collections for network libraries.

- Directs reissue and re-record of books previously produced for the national collection.

- Directs collection advisory groups consisting of patrons and librarians.

Engineering Section

The Engineering Section is responsible for the design, development, specification, production release, and configuration control of all audio product accessories and processes; determining the method of measurement for all technical specifications; certifying compliance of the preproduction models with the specification; maintaining awareness of state-of-the-art developments applicable to audio technologies; and conducting continual programs for product improvement and innovation.

- Develops technical specifications and monitors production of audio products and processes generated by the division.

- Evaluates product samples against NLS specifications and provides written reports of the results.

- Recommends solutions to problems which develop during production of equipment and related materials.

- Provides consultation to manufacturers, on site, for solutions of problems.

Production Control Section

The Production Control Section is responsible for supervising and coordinating the production and distribution of reading materials in recorded, braille, and other formats; scheduling and assigning reading materials for production in various formats by manufacturers and volunteers; monitoring and controlling the status and distribution of reading materials in production; and providing detailed reports for use by all levels of management to direct, evaluate, and control production operations.

The Recording Studio Unit of the Production Control Section is responsible for determining the narration requirements for titles to be recorded and provides guidance in this area to manufacturers and volunteers; maintaining the NLS/BPH recording facility; and scheduling and recording materials at the recording studio.

- Controls and monitors production and distribution of reading materials on cassette, on discs, and in braille.

- Through its Recording Studio Unit, determines narration requirements and provides guidance to producers.

- Interacts and coordinates with contractors to identify and resolve production problems.

- Ensures the timely flow of materials in production through quality assurance, mass production, and shipment to network libraries.

- Monitors a centralized magazine mailing list to braille-reading patrons.

- Develops and revises bid packages for materials in special media, including braille music.

- Purchases cassette containers for a continual flow to producers of cassette titles.

- Purchases special adhesive labels for containers that must be able to withstand temperature and humidity changes in the network libraries.

- Coordinates the recording of books by volunteer groups under contract to NLS.

- Communicates with network libraries on matters relating to the production of books and magazines.

- Provides network libraries with lists of titles shipped but not yet in the microfiche catalog and with a shelf-planning guide.

- Controls the copy allotment system through which libraries receive the number of copies of each title requested.

Quality Assurance Section

The Quality Assurance Section is responsible for guaranteeing that the quality and performance of all braille and audio products and processes meet the standards and specifications of NLS/BPH; ascertaining that all technical specifications of NLS/BPH can be verified by standard measurements as part of the production process, that all potential contractors for production of materials have adequate quality assurance capabilities, and that all contracts and specifications contain adequate provisions to guarantee that the products will meet the required standards; and producing periodic reports on the performance of contractors.

- Assures quality and performance of all products in conformance with established standards and specifications.

- Performs 10 percent sampling reviews for compliance of products produced for NLS with NLS specifications.

- Evaluates control copies of all mass-produced braille and recorded magazines.

- Recommends improvements in braille and recorded specifications for books and magazines.

- Conducts on-site inspections at contractors to monitor production of NLS equipment, related materials, and special media titles.

- Develops new techniques for quality control of NLS products.

- Quality controls all braille and recorded materials.

- Tests manufacturers' duplication equipment for crosstalk and other problems which develop during production runs.

- Repairs and maintains recording and duplicating equipment at NLS, as well as braille thermoform equipment.

- Quality assures equipment repaired at national repair sites.

- Assists in providing duplication training to network librarians.

NETWORK DIVISION

The Network Division is responsible for managing activities related to establishing, developing, guiding, and monitoring a network of more than 160 cooperating state and local libraries and machine agencies offering direct library service to blind and physically handicapped residents of the United States, its territories and possessions, and U.S. citizens living abroad; maintaining close and active liaison with schools, health care facilities, and other organizations interested or active in services to blind and physically handicapped persons, with library schools, and with appropriate state and local agencies; determining user eligibility for service from NLS/BPH; monitoring the multistate center contracts; and supervising the four sections and staff officer that make up the division:

Network Division Office

- Monitors national network of over 160 cooperating state and local agencies; recommends initiation, consolidation, or dropping of network agencies.

- Plans and formulates policies and procedures, sets goals and objectives for the Network Division and for the national network.

- Plans and directs NLS music, reference, consumer and volunteer, inventory management, and network support services; develops budget proposals and justifications, program statements, management plans, travel and training plans; formulates priorities within the division and justifies additional resources when necessary;

- Acts as the NLS expert on all aspects related to network services and circulation of special format library materials to readers; plans and assigns evaluative and analytical studies; identifies and defines new programs for investigation; develops technical specifications for innovative projects relating to improving existing service delivery; coordinates work with appropriate experts and consultants, monitors appropriate contracts, and oversees the contract monitoring of division staff.

- Interprets NLS national service policies to state library agencies, directors of major public libraries, other key federal, state, and local agency staff, library educators, and other professionals to assure program understanding and commitment of state resources.

- Directs the multistate centers and other network agencies, advises state and local agencies, prepares contract documentation, evaluation criteria, schedules, statements of work, and evaluation of services; establishes policies and general operating procedures for these centers.

- Serves as the U.S. Postal Service liaison to resolve problems between postal service and network agencies and between postal service and patrons.

- Interprets postal laws and regulations.

- Codifies files relating to interpretations of postal regulations.

- Writes articles for newsletters to inform network of changes in postal regulations as they affect the program.

- Serves as the program expert on eligibility for service of all applicants, interprets the statutory mandate of the U.S. Congress, resolves questionable referrals and makes final determination, conferring with appropriate expert authorities when necessary.

- Reviews and approves network library applications for service to ensure conformity with NLS policies.

- Reviews and approves network library loan policies to patrons; reviews and approves network library recommendations on suspending service to patrons who abuse service.

- Directs the division's national network consultant program; reviews staff site evaluations assessing network libraries in elements of library service to eligible readers, and their utilization of NLS resources; ensures that approved ALA Standards of service are used to monitor effectiveness of network agency services; advised on recommended changes for the ALA Standards.

- Represents NLS and speaks for NLS at national and regional conferences, seminars, and exhibits; chairs conference workshops, and other meetings at which resources, consumer needs, service delivery systems and interagency responsibilities are discussed with key agency staff; writes articles for publication; has frequent contacts with the public, individual users, consumer groups, network staff and others through informal and professional meetings, presentation of speeches, telephone and correspondence contacts.

Consumer Relations Officer

The Consumer Relations Officer is responsible for establishing and maintaining active liaison with individual users and consumer groups; conducting continuing user surveys; disseminating information about user inquiries to NLS/BPH and network libraries; providing information and reference assistance to readers; conducting user orientations and tours.

- Coordinates NLS tactile map activities including acquisition and circulation.

- Serves as NLS focal point for all matters relating to NLS consumer services.

- Coordinates responses to consumer concerns and letters.

- Coordinates evaluations of NLS equipment by consumers and network libraries.

- Assists NLS sections with patron surveys and correspondence.

- Assists network libraries with individual patron problems and library consumer relations activities:

  > Consumer Relations in Libraries (handbook)
  > patron handbooks
  > consumer advisory committees
  > patron newsletters
  > Consumer Bulletins

- Compiles and distributes internal monthly log of consumer concerns received by NLS; produces a quarterly narrative analysis of these and distributes this to network libraries.

- Maintains an extensive knowledge of the computer-based technology giving blind and physically handicapped individuals access to print in electronic formats.

- Coordinates consumer-oriented projects and responds to inquiries in this area.

- Keeps abreast of advances in this field affecting blind and physically handicapped individuals.

- Maintains an awareness of the techniques and opportunities for using libraries containing primarily printed materials.

- Assists network libraries and others with activities and projects designed to enhance blind and physically handicapped individuals' access to other library collections or access through technological devices.

Inventory Management Section

The Inventory Management Section is responsible for controlling the national inventory, storage, retrieval, and handling of materials used in the NLS/BPH program; distributing equipment, furnishings, and other items delivered to NLS/BPH; monitoring, coordinating, and evaluating the activities of three multistate centers; maintaining a procedures manual for use by the multistate centers and a supplies catalog for use by network libraries; and supervising and evaluating book redistribution procedures.

- Ships, receives, and stores approximately 500 stock items needed by NLS, multistate centers (MSCs), and network libraries.

- Initiates, coordinates, and supervises the semiannual excess (XESS) book redistribution program with network libraries; serves as contract monitor for XESS.

- Obtains servicing and fuel for gas-powered vehicles and equipment assigned to the Inventory Management Section.

- Maintains the NLS archives of all NLS-produced books and magazines now stored at the Landover Annex.

- Orders and stocks shipping supplies for all NLS shipping activities.

- Maintains a log of the Transportation of Things account and reconciles log with status of funds reports.

- Maintains consolidated inventory of NLS and multistate center stock items; issues quarterly comprehensive reports.

- Assists with day-to-day coordination of multistate center activities; prepares minutes of annual MSC directors' meeting; coordinates redistribution of stock items among NLS and multistate centers; coordinates the annual MSC services survey, whereby network libraries evaluate MSC services.

- Coordinates the post-13,000 BRA braille books project; processes replacement orders and sends these to the contractor; ships replacement volumes of BRAs to MSCs.

- Produces and keeps current the Multistate Center Supplies Catalog, a looseleaf handbook used by all network libraries.

- Maintains picking stock for NLS staff of all NLS-produced publications.

- Shelves and maintains collections of NLS-produced books at the Taylor Street Annex.

- Ships Moon type tactile maps and 33-1/3 rpm books to patrons.

- Coordinates shipments of NLS materials for NLS exhibits.

Music Section

The Music Section is responsible for developing, maintaining, circulating, and promoting the use of national collections in the field of music, including the collection of large-print books about music and musicians, music scores, and instructional methods, and other special format music materials on cassette, disc, and in braille; providing access to music periodicals; developing and maintaining a noncirculating print reference collection of books about music and musicians; and encouraging the development of new techniques and materials for teaching music to blind and physically handicapped individuals.

- Catalogs instructional music recordings, standard print music reference books, and braille and large print music and books about music.

- Provides music reference services to blind and physically handicapped music readers and reference information about music and blind and physically handicapped musicians to the general public.

- Acquires braille music and books and instructional music recordings from domestic and, as appropriate, international sources.

- Initiates and, sometimes, monitors production of large print and braille music and books about music and of instructional music recordings for NLS music program.

- Secures copyright permission to produce materials specifically for the NLS music program.

- Selects music books, music, and instructional music recordings for the NLS program.

- Circulates music and books about music in braille and large print and instructional music recordings to persons eligible for the NLS music program.

- Compiles three magazines for special format production and direct mail distribution to NLS readers:

  > Musical Mainstream (large print, braille, and flexible disc)
  > Contemporary Sound Track (flexible disc)
  > Popular Music Lead Sheets (braille)

- Undertakes special projects to develop and provide new materials and services to NLS music readers, including publications such as the Dictionary of Braille Music Signs and the International Directory of Braille Music Collections and courses for music theory, piano, recorder, and accordion designed for blind and physically handicapped musicians.

- Evaluates reader satisfaction with NLS music services and materials through surveys.

- Keeps current with technical and materials developments relating to blind and physically handicapped musicians and their music needs.

- Serves as an international clearinghouse for braille music through an international acquisitions program and through answering questions from the international community about whether and where braille music can be obtained by loan or purchase.

- Compiles, designs, and publishes informational materials about the NLS music program for distribution to the readers and the general public, for example, catalogs, music reference circulars, brochures, and fact - sheets.

- Drafts contracts, project proposals, and specifications relating to the development, production, and distribution of NLS music library materials and services.

Network Services Section

The Network Services Section is responsible for coordinating national network activities, including both responding to inquiries about network services and coordinating responses to network inquiries; directing the network interlibrary loan programs; providing consultant services to identify problem patterns and to evaluate performance in relation to established standards; compiling bibliographies of special media materials; organizing the orientation program for network participants; maintaining a procedures manual for use by network libraries; and providing library service to U.S. citizens who are living outside the U.S.

- Provides on-site consultant services to network libraries and machine-lending agencies.
- Writes follow-up consultant reports on visits making recommendations based on ALA Revised Standards and Guidelines. Reports revised by NLS managers, copy to library and administering agency.
- Contacts each network library not scheduled for a visit and monitors progress on latest recommendations (12 months since prior visit). Reports reviewed by NLS managers; copy to library and administering agency.
- Provides overseas library service to U.S. citizens.
- Speaks at consumer advisory committee meetings, subregional library meetings, Friends of Library group meetings, and volunteer recognition functions.
- Reviews, updates, and maintains the Network Library Manual.
- Produces draft subject bibliographies for publication in special formats to aid readers in book selection.
- Produces short-length bibliographies on fiction series and narrowly focused subjects to assist libraries in serving reader needs.
- Produces a manual for network libraries using Bibliographic Retrieval Services to search the BLND file of books in recorded and braille formats.
- Assists readers and network libraries by performing and printing searches of the BLND file to identify needed books.
- Provides semiannual state-of-the-network reports to NLS staff.

Reference Section

The Reference Section is responsible for providing to network libraries, other professional groups, and the general public a national reference and referral service on blindness and physical handicaps, except

in the fields of medicine and law; providing special and general reference services to the staff of NLS/BPH; compiling and distributing information on resources in the fields of blindness and physical handicaps for network libraries and the general public; developing a collection of print materials on blindness and physical handicaps to support the activities described above; maintaining records and preparing statistical reports on network activities and program developments; coordinating an automated mailing list incorporating data on readers, libraries, and organizations; and providing consultant services on volunteer programs in network libraries.

- Provides a reference and referral service in the fields of blindness, physical handicaps, and library services to special groups as follows:

  > answers questions by correspondence and telephone from the Congress, NLS readers, network libraries, and the general public
  > answers queries from NLS staff on any work-related topic, using a variety of commercial and Library of Congress online databases to locate books, articles, reports, etc.
  > compiles and distributes information kits (package libraries) on topics of timely concern to readers and network librarians
  > compiles and revises existing reference publications:
    --reference circulars (15 in print)
    --reference bibliographies (8 in print)
    --factsheets (6 in print plus 2 in Spanish translations)

- Acquires and catalogs new and retrospective materials for reference collections and giveaway collections as follows:

  > orders print books
  > orders print periodicals subscriptions
  > orders print pamphlets and documents
  > compiles "Added Entries," a quarterly acquisitions list of items added to collections and distributed to network libraries
  > maintains and distributes a listing of "Subject Headings Used in the NLS Reference Collections"

- Maintains a database of all magazines in special media (braille, recorded, and large type, etc.) and produces Magazines in Special Media for broad distribution.

- Collects and distributes information about federal laws, regulations, and other federal documents available in special formats.

- Serves as primary source of program data for NLS and the network as follows:

  > compiles annual readership/circulation reports
  > conducts annual survey of network libraries

> compiles biannual network library "Address List of Regional and Subregional Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped"
> compiles annual directory, Library Resources for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
> compiles subject index to network bulletins and other reports issued to the NLS network
> updates annually the general program fact sheet and publications checklist, "Facts: Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped"

- Serves as liaison between network libraries, NLS, and the Comprehensive Mailing List System (CMLS) contractor on all matters pertaining to the daily operation of the mailing list system; monitors CMLS contract as follows:

  > issues progress reports as needed to the network
  > selects libraries for magazine merge process
  > maintains CMLS Handbook in current condition, updating as needed
  > provides mailing labels of network libraries to producers and in-house
  > expands network use of NLSNET/CMLS automated interface for mailing transactions

- Prepares new and revised entries for the Network Library Manual and distributes revised and new entries to the network.

- Publishes Update, a quarterly newsletter on volunteer concerns and activities related to library services for blind and physically handicapped individuals.

- Compiles and revises the biennial Volunteers Who Produce Books and maintains the database on volunteer organizations and individuals who produce reading materials in braille, large-print, and recorded formats.